

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 9 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I should like to inform you that the units of the United States Navy that are on station in the Arabian Gulf against the wishes of the peoples of the region are continuing to engage in acts of piracy and provocation and to take hostile action against vessels carrying civilian merchandise in Iraqi territorial waters and elsewhere. Units of the Australian fleet have recently begun to join the intrusive patrols of the United States naval forces in their acts of aggression, and they intercept vessels and assault and question their crews. They also sometimes detain ships and their crews for long periods of time. I present to you hereunder some examples of these practices.

At 1045 hours on 7 July 2002 the tugboat *Al-Rayah* and mechanical tender No. 1, which belongs to the Iraq Ports Authority, came under armed attack from two military craft from the Australian frigate bearing the hull number 05 while the tender was resupplying the tugboat with fresh water. The persons concerned left at 1140 hours.

The Australian frigate then headed for the Iraqi tugboat *Al-Yarmuk*, which had on board a medical and chemical team from the research unit at Basrah University that was conducting chemical and bacteriological analyses and taking readings of radiation levels. The frigate harassed the tugboat as it headed for Mina' al-Bakr to take samples of the water. It then withdrew after the tugboat dropped anchor.

The presence of the Australian fleet and its assistance to the United States Navy in its ongoing assaults on Iraqi vessels in the Arabian Gulf constitute acts of aggression that endanger the movement of civilian shipping in the Arabian Gulf. They are incompatible with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the international norms governing the safety of maritime navigation, and Australia and the United States of America must bear full legal responsibility for them.

Iraq affirms its right, in accordance with the principle of international responsibility, to seek compensation for the damage sustained by it or by its nationals as a result of the criminal acts being committed by these invading forces against ships in the Arabian Gulf region.

We urge you to intervene in order to prevent acts of aggression and terrorism by the United States and Australia that are in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, public international law and international humanitarian law, and we



ask you to call upon the two countries concerned to withdraw their fleets from the Arabian Gulf.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed A. **Al-Douri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
